

**MINUTES**  
**BUHL CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**BUHL CITY HALL**  
**03/07/2023**

Tuesday, March 7, 2023

6:30 P.M.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** by Mayor Carter at 6:30 p.m.

2. **ROLL CALL:**

Councilors Hadrava, Kealy, Loeffler, Towner; Mayor Carter; Engineer John Jamnick; Administrator Jeffries.

3. **REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS:**

None.

4. **CITIZENS FORUM:**

None.

5. **COUNCIL ADDITIONS TO AGENDA:**

Add Items B-1 and B-2.

B-1. Authorization for Councilor Loeffler and Administrator Jeffries to attend North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity Annual Dinner.

B-2. Appointment of Councilor Loeffler to Long Range Planning and Zoning Commission.

6. **CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Minutes:

i. Regular City Council Meeting - February 21, 2023 - Approved

B. Claims:

i. Payroll #2 \$ 2,450.00

Payroll #4 \$ 11,436.34

ii. A/P \$ 33,988.80

**TOTAL \$ 47,875.14**

**Motion by Kealy to approve the consent agenda. Supported by Towner.  
Motion carried unanimously.**

## 7. BUSINESS:

- A. Contractor's Application for Payment No. 13 for the City Wide Infrastructure Improvements project in the amount of \$402,800.49 to Casper Construction, Inc.

**Motion by Hadrava to approve Contractor's Application for Payment No. 13 for Project No. 19-599 in the amount of \$402,800.49 to Casper Construction, Inc. Supported by Loeffler.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject.

Engineer Jamnick (JPJ Engineering) indicated that this portion of the project work has been successfully completed and that proceeds due Primary Contractor Casper Construction, Inc., should be released with the condition that a final retainage amount of \$50,000.00 to be withheld pending successful completion of all remaining open punch list items. This amount represents the remainder of the contract amount due for this project.

Engineer also indicated that the city was working with the USDA Rural Development on closing out the loan which was obtained for construction financing by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2023.

Engineer discussed expecting to issue a compensating change order upon project close-out to address the final disposition of all project elements.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

- B. Certificate of Substantial Completion to Casper Construction, Inc. for Engineer's Project No. 19-599 (City Wide Infrastructure Improvements).

**Motion by Kealy to acknowledge receipt of the Certificate of Substantial Completion for Project No. 19-599 and to direct the Mayor to execute its signature upon the same. Supported by Towner.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject.

Engineer indicated that paving was completed on June 17, 2022, which deemed the project as substantially complete. Accepting this certificate establishes final completion date of the project and expiration of warranty period of June 17, 2023. A final walk-through will be conducted later in the spring (May-June), which will also include a warranty inspection conducted by JPJ Engineering and USDA Rural Development.

Engineer stressed that comments from the public should be forwarded to the City for consideration before the end of the warranty period.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

- B-1. Habitat for Humanity Annual Dinner - Authorization for Administrator and Councilor Loeffler to attend March 23, 2023.

**Motion by Kealy to authorize the Administrator and Councilor Loeffler to attend the North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity annual dinner on the City's behalf.  
Supported by Hadrava.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject.

It was noted that Habitat for Humanity presently has two (2) single family homes under construction in the city, and had plans to construct three (3) additional single-family dwellings in the city in 2024.

**Motion carried; Councilor Loeffler abstaining.**

- B-2. Appointment of Councilor Loeffler to Long-Range Planning and Zoning Commission.

**Motion by Towner to confirm the appointment of Councilor Loeffler to the Long-Range Planning and Zoning Commission for a three-year term, effective upon passage.  
Supported by Kealy.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject.

The term of this appointment will not be affected or impacted by the concurrent (2-year) term of Councilor Loeffler's City Council appointment.

**Motion carried; Councilor Loeffler abstaining.**

- C. Resolution 23-16 Authorizing the City to Make Application and Accept Funds through the IRRR Culture and Tourism Grant Program for Burton Park Enhancements.

**Motion by Towner to adopt City of Buhl Resolution 23-16 and forward the same to the MN Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation.  
Supported by Loeffler.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject.

This resolution clarifies that these funds specifically be made available for Burton Park Enhancement projects.

Thanks was extended to Finance Manager Thronson and the Recreation Board for their efforts on the original grant application.

**Roll call vote: Councilors: Kealy – Aye; Loeffler – Aye; Hadrava – Aye; Towner – Aye;  
Mayor: Carter – Aye.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

- D. St. Louis County classification of Parcel No. 115-0030-00800 (313 Woodbridge Ave) to nonconservation.

**Motion by Towner to approve the classification of Parcel No. 115-0030-00800 to nonconservation.**

**Supported by Hadrava.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject.

Administrator explained the background of this item. Discussion ensued regarding acquisition of tax-forfeited properties and ultimate disposition of the same, including tear-downs with no rebuilding, and those potential property tax implications. Further discussion that of the three (3) options available to the City regarding the disposition of this parcel (1 – approve the classification; 2 – disagree with and disapprove the classification; or 3 – acquire the parcel), the most acceptable option is to approve the classification, which will allow the parcel to be returned to private ownership and allows the County to offer it for private sale.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

- E. Project Proposal for City of Buhl Comprehensive Plan Update from ARDC Planning (Arrowhead Regional Development Commission).

Informational.

Discussion regarding what a comprehensive plan is, the receipt of a Project Proposal for a Comprehensive Plan Update from the Arrowhead Regional Development Commission (ARDC), the status of the current comprehensive plan, the anticipated timeline for this initiative, the proposed budgetary costs, the possible availability of IRRR funding assistance, and that this initiative is currently not budgeted for 2023.

Comments that the Recreation Board should be included in this initiative were followed by summary comments of the potential process and/or timeline.

Administrator will inquire as to a potential payment schedule for this initiative.

Staff recommendation is to begin to review and evaluate this proposal as to how it may accommodate the City's long-range planning initiatives.

- F. State of Minnesota; House Capital Investment committee hearing on HF 85 (Buhl infrastructure bill) – Authorization for Mayor and Administrator to attend and/or testify March 8, 2023.

**Motion by Kealy to authorize the Mayor and Administrator to attend the Mn House of Representatives Capital Investment Committee Hearing on HF85, and to testify on the City's behalf in support of the proposed legislation.**

**Supported by Loeffler.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject.

The scheduled hearing includes an individual item for requesting appropriating grant funding to the City to continue the improvement and expansion of its water system infrastructure.

Administrator gave update on participation via Zoom in a Mn Senate hearing on same subject held on March 7, 2023; further update given that separate individual meetings will be held between City personnel and Mn State Senator Rob Farnsworth and Mn State Representative Dave Lislegard when at the state legislature.

Mayor thanked Mn State Senator Rob Farnsworth and Mn State Representative Dave Lislegard, as well as The Costin Group, for their participation in, support for, and authorship of these important pieces of legislation.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

- G. League of Minnesota Cities; City Day on the Hill – Authorization for Administrator to attend March 9, 2023.

**Motion by Hadrava to authorize the Administrator to attend the League of Minnesota Cities "City Day on the Hill" on the City's behalf.**

**Supported by Loeffler.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject.

Discussion regarding the value of learning about important legislative issues currently impacting cities, hearing from state policymakers about legislative proposals and their impact on cities, meeting and connecting with state legislators and LMC Intergovernmental Relations staff, and increasing the visibility of Minnesota cities as key partners in policymaking. It was noted that participation in this session will improve and elevate the City on its ultimate positions on upcoming legislation and/or policy.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

- H. League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust: Safety and Loss Control workshop – Authorization for Administrator to attend April 11, 2023.

**Motion by Hadrava to authorize the Administrator to attend a League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust "Safety and Loss Control workshop" on the City's behalf.  
Supported by Kealy.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject.

It was noted that this session will provide the City with updated comprehensive information on risk management and is designed to help reduce (loss) costs and avoid losses, and that it will be particularly valuable in managing the risks associated with physical asset bases.

Suggestion that councilors should also consider attending; Administrator will provide additional information regarding this.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

I. Employment Agreement Negotiations (Closed Session).

Motion by Towner to close the open session. Supported by Kealy. Motion carried unanimously. Motion by Towner to open the closed session. Supported by Loeffler. Motion carried unanimously. Motion by Kealy to close the closed session. Supported by Loeffler. Motion carried unanimously. Motion by Towner to re-open the open session. Supported by Hadrava. Motion carried unanimously.

**Motion by Kealy to approve Employment Agreement between the City of Buhl and Anthony Jeffries.  
Supported by Loeffler.**

Discussion. Approve/Reject.

Jeffries to serve as City Clerk-Treasurer-Administrator for the City of Buhl.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

J. Councilor's Comments.

Councilor Kealy –

Senior Citizens' meal to be offered Thursday, March 16 from 5 to 7 pm.

Price is \$8; \$4 for youth 12 and under

Meat Loaf dinner is on the menu

Blarney Bonspiel to be held Friday/Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> at curling club;  
1<sup>st</sup> Draw at 6:30 on Friday (BEST weekend in Buhl!!); Finals at 7:30 on Saturday;  
Thank yous to Trent Pink and the Public Works crew for snow removal efforts at former convenience store/car wash property!

Councilor Towner –

Positive reaction to and feedback on attending League of Minnesota Cities elected official training – there are other cities with similar issues and challenges as Buhl, and this organization is helpful in sorting through these items and getting answers to questions – session was well worth attending.

K. Mayor's Comments.

Mayor Carter reminded and requested that all residents that have identified any issues with the work that was done on the latest Capital Improvement Project activities forward those to City staff at their earliest opportunity, but certainly before June (17<sup>th</sup>), so these items can get consideration to be added to the punch list for correction. Keep all eyes on this project! Even if it's the smallest thing, bring it in!

**8. ADJOURN:**

Motion by Towner to adjourn. Supported by Hadrava. Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.



Brandin Carter, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Tony Jeffries, City Clerk